

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTIONIST;

A MEDIUM

FOR THE FREE DISCUSSION OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES
AND PRACTICAL MEASURES,

PERTAINING TO

HUMAN PROGRESS

AND GENERAL WELL-BEING.

THE CAUSE OF TRUTH IS BEST PROMOTED BY FREE INQUIRY. ERROR
ALONE FEARS INVESTIGATION.

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CONTENTS.

Liberty, - - - - -	85, 86	Extremes, - - - - -	50, 51
Social and Moral Condition of the World, 37, 38		Love of the World, - - - - -	51
Letter from England, - - - - -	38	Reform for Reformers, - - - - -	51
The Marriage Question, - - - - -	39, 40	Divine Providence, - - - - -	52
What is Religion—Poetry, - - - - -	41	Sp. Com. on Marriage - - - - -	53
The Battle of Freedom—Poetry, - - - - -	41	Spirit Counsel, - - - - -	54, 55 56
The Bible, - - - - -	42, 43, 44	My Soul's Thralldom and its Deliverance:	
Infidel Repentance and What it Proves, 45, 46, 47		—An Autobiography, - - - - -	57, 58, 59, 60, 61
Individual Freedom, - - - - -	48	Inquiries Answered, - - - - -	61, 62
Style;—Brevity, Precision, Clearness, - - - - -	49	The Anti-Panthéist, - - - - -	62

CINCINNATI;

PUBLISHED BY THE RISING STAR ASSOCIATION.

L. H. BIGAREL, PRINTER.

FOR SALE BY F. BLY, VINE STREET; BELA MARSH, 15 FRANKLIN STREET, BOSTON.

TERMS, ONE DOLLAR A YEAR; FIVE COPIES, FOUR DOLLARS.

NAMES.—If correspondents who have not already done so, would send us the names of such of their friends as would be likely to take an interest in the circulation of this Journal, we should thank them in the name of free inquiry.

DISCUSSION.—Some of the friends of Orthodoxy having expressed a desire to hear one of their preachers in discussion with the Junior Editor of this Journal; and the latter believing that good must result from free investigation, holds himself in readiness to discuss, at any time, the questions at issue between them.

THE OTHER SIDE.—We have received a communication entitled: "Panorama of Human Progress." It is from a member of the M. E. Church, and will appear in our next, with a reply.

LITERARY NOTICES.

FOWLERS & WELLS' JOURNALS. No. 308 Broadway N. Y.—The AMERICAN PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL and the WATER CURE JOURNAL. Monthlies; and each \$1,00 a year. LIFE ILLUSTRATED. Weekly. \$2,00 per annum. Every reformer has his own work to do, and the Fowlers have theirs. We approve of their work, perhaps more than they would approve of ours. But we think it important that both be done. They have accomplished much good through the agency of their lectures, books and journals, and it is our sincere wish that they may accomplish a great deal more. The human mind must get a start on the road of progress; and the Fowlers helped start us. Liberalism advances westward, and reacts toward the rising sun. When the students of Mental Science become fitted for a higher range of freedom, they demand it, pass on, and become social revolutionists! There are hundreds just such now, and thousands more are coming!

THE PEOPLE'S PAPER. Weekly. \$2,00 per annum. Boston.—The "Paper" proposes to discuss the following subjects: 1. Homes for the people. 2. Cheap bread for the people, 3. Money for the people without interest. 4. Lectures for the people at a trifle above nothing. 5. Education for the people at the same rate. 6. New inventions for the people of labor-saving machinery, domestic economy, &c. 7. A vital literature, &c.

TYPE OF THE TIMES. Semi-monthly. \$1,00 a year. Longley Brothers, Cincinnati, O. The "Type" has changed form and character. It has shut down on "radicalisms" that it may be acceptable to phonetic reformers in general. With the exception of an occasional article, it will all be printed in phonotopy; and as "a Journal of the Writing and Spelling Reform," it will advance a wing of progress, not to be dispensed with in the great battle of truth. We want reading made attractive and easy; and education efficient, thorough and integral, for this is the "beginning," and we might say, the middle and end of "all righteousness."

PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN. Semi-monthly. \$1,00 a year. Adin Ballou, Hopedale, Milford, Mass.—This is the Organ of the Hopedale Community, and is comparatively a free paper, having admitted a discussion on free love. The views of its editors as to theology and socialism are a singular compound of compressive fogysm and cheerful progression. But optimism must prevail; and the Practical Christian is doing a good work. Everywhere do we need less theoretical theology and more practical religion.

THE SPIRIT ADVOCATE. Monthly. 50 cents a year. Geo. Haskell, Rockford, Ill. This is a 'spirit'ed little journal, now in its second year. We have found a freshness and piquancy in its columns, which we could wish were more frequently to be met with in bigger journals.

THE SPIRITUAL MESSENGER, Cin., O., a weekly at \$2,00 a year, edited by Dr. E. Mead, is doing good service in the cause of Liberalism. There is a shaking amongst the dry bones, and even now the breath of life is coming into them, an exceeding great army.

THE
SOCIAL REVOLUTIONIST.

FEBRUARY, 1856.

LIBERTY.

BY J. H. COOK.

"O Liberty! thou power supremely bright,
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight."

Kind reader, glance not hastily and indifferently at my theme because a hackneyed one. There is a broader, deeper, and higher liberty, than ever a Henry proclaimed, or Republicanism has ever perceived or procured. There is a constitution more sacred, more important to be rightly analyzed, read, construed and obeyed, than that which even a Webster has so ably defended: yea the Constitution of Man; the noblest of nature's works, and far above all human laws, enactments, constitutions or creeds. Its nature and character; its claims and rights, are holy and indestructible and MUST—WILL BE known and heeded. As an Anthropologist, I have long desired to give to man that freedom of thought and action, which is indelibly written upon his nature. Be it known that mind, ALL MIND is free; and that it instinctively repels all restraint upon its natural action. Mind, although comparatively free in the United States, is by no means as free as the politicians or the clergy assert. Birds, animals and MEN are caged and chained, physically and mentally, by custom, fashion, selfishness and law, I would have laws to PREVENT, never to punish crime; laws compatible with man's nature; and that recognise in cases of crime, the INNER as well as outer condition of the culprit; and treat him accordingly. If legislatures and courts knew the nature of man, the former would abolish many old, and enact many new laws; and the latter would be often disposed to say, as he who KNEW what was in man, said: "Go and sin no more." Moreover, it is a great query with me, whether law, on the whole, prevents more crime, than it causes. We talk about the majesty and sanctity of law; and because the mass of men are passive and peaceable, we (not I) are prone in our ignorance of nature's laws of mind and progression, to attribute it to HUMAN laws and institutions. Men of predominant animal natures, desire to control others, and to be protected in selfish schemes for power and property. Men whose higher nature predominates; who "are a law unto themselves," feel no need of law for themselves; no desire to exercise arbitrary animal power over others; and therefore, should not be included under, and compressed and oppressed by laws adapted to lower planes of existence. I here distinctly proclaim to the world, that I suffer under, and feel compressed by man's laws and customs, that it has no more right to impose on me than the Puritans had to banish and persecute Quakers; that it is as absurd for it to make laws for me, as it would be to force me to wear the garments of my infancy;—and that I shall resist and react in proportion to my compression.

The individuality and expansiveness of every developed mind, and the self-acting tendency of all its faculties, cause it often to disregard those laws and customs which compress and oppress it, or restrict its natural liberty. The reaction of higher natures upon

the society that would pull them back and pull them down, is very great; and not yet much understood or regarded. Expanded minds are like gases which require much more room than when they were in the form of solids, or unexpanded. As matter ascends in the scale of existence, by expansion and refinement, it gains in power; hence we see why it is that the physical mob-power "is growing beautifully less" in its efficiency to quell the voice of truth. "Whosoever shall fall on this stone—DEVELOPED MIND-POWER—shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder." Individual and personal rights, naturally and absolutely, sacred and paramount to every thing else, are now wofully absorbed and invaded by written laws, constitutions, charters, opinions and customs. It is utterly impossible to prescribe in, artificial language, rules of action for men; for every man's idea of right and freedom is the product of his unwritten constitution. Hence the endless differences that arise between the learned in the political world, as to the import of written laws and constitutions; and in the theological world, as to the meaning of creeds and text books.

The drop of water that reflects red to one person, reflects not red, but some other color to every other person. I once heard a celebrated divine say, that: "Imperfect nature, and misleading words (what a comprehensive phrase,) dimmed our vision of God;" and if he had said of man too, it would have been equally true. Let us turn then to man's organization, read its unmistakable language, and solve the problem of true liberty and a greatly improved society. By so doing we shall become convinced, that most men might be left to their own SELF-government, (and indeed there is no other,) and the evils that the law attempts, but fails to prevent; and moreover disease, and discord be vastly diminished, and not increased. Thus would be annihilated the innumerable, piebald, multi-form scape-goats of the age. Not one half of man's moral power can now find room, or permission, to wield its mighty and irresistible force over our sin-stained earth. Ask the liberal far-seeing soul, longing for the fruition of that ideal life of the distant future, which his intellect clearly discerns, if he feels free—if he finds himself at liberty to speak and act entirely as his mind dictates, and he will answer emphatically, no. The restraints of law and stereotyped opinion, often prevent a man from doing much good, in attempting to prevent him from doing some evil. I always wanted to do just as I had a mind; and it has often been a great expense: but that expense has made me a wiser and better man to-day than I ever was before.

The atoms of a chemical compound are free to move in the direction of, and towards the objects by which they are attracted. So it should be with men and women in general. They are too much like dumb-driven cattle, forced by law, opinion and necessity, into spheres and alliances for which they have no affinity.

Avarice and animal intellect are blind and deaf to the conditions and claims of humanity. There is a traffic in the souls of white as well as in the bodies of black men. Society puts manacles and straight jackets upon men, and then persecutes, oppresses and punishes them because they ("free agents"?) do not act freely and virtuously. But thank Truth, it shall not always be so. Man's expanding and progressing higher nature shall gradually and surely gain the ascendancy over the animal man, and a long summer of peace, harmony, justice, attractions and an abundance for all, will succeed this winter of want, repulsion, coercion, perversion and inversion. We need—we shall have a form of society analogous to the Human Constitution, in which there will be INDIVIDUALITY and ATTRACTIVE, COOPERATIVE ACTION, where each plane of human development shall have freedom of action, by which it will slowly but surely pass to higher life. O man, study thyself, and learn liberty and Christ-like liberality! "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" It is "WITHIN you." Quench not its fires. Has man a MIND? Shall it not be free?

SOCIAL AND MORAL CONDITION OF THE WORLD.—NO I.

BY J. M. STAHL.

When we look abroad over this wide world, what a scene of confusion, strife, and bloodshed is presented to our view. Among the lower animals, we behold one class tearing to pieces and devouring another. In fact, almost the sole enjoyment of many of the carnivora is to satiate their appetites on the blood of the slain.

Nor is man an exception to this blood letting and flesh eating. He not only slays the inferior animals and satiates his appetite thereon, but he marches into mortal combat with his own species. Thousands are engaged in manufacturing the implements of death, and furnishing the munitions of war, while thousands more, march to the field of battle and there in cool blood, torture and murder their fellow beings! Man is truly the most fiend-like of all created beings; and yet he is said to be "only a little lower than the angels." True there are many individuals of the human family, who are indeed angelic and God-like; but to take the whole race, where will we find a species of the lower animals, half so fiend-like, or that has inflicted a tenth part the miseries and death on their fellow beings, man has. It would seem that almost the whole human family are descendants of Ishmael; for the hand of man has ever been against his fellow, and it will inevitably continue to be so until his human, or spiritual nature, predominates over his animal. But when we contemplate the gross wickedness of the world, we are ready to ask the question; will that day ever come when man's spiritual nature will predominate over his lower passions, and all strife, persecution and bloodshed, be at an end. We would despair of the world's ever arriving at this desirable condition; were it not for facts that go to prove that man is slowly, though steadily progressing in all that is noble and Godlike. When we take a retrospective view of the past, and view such characters as Antiochus Epiphanes, who butchered 40,000 of the inhabitants of Jerusalem in cold blood; as Hamilcar who threw all the prisoners that came into his hands, to be destroyed by wild beasts; as Asdrubal, who put out the eyes of all the Roman captives he had taken during two years, cut off their noses, fingers, legs and arms, tore their skin to pieces with iron rakes and harrows, and threw them headlong from the tops of his battlements; as Jenghis Khan, who caused seventy chiefs to be thrown into caldrons of boiling water, and took pleasure in beholding his army beheading 100,000 prisoners at once; as Tamerlane who displayed his sportive cruelty in pounding three or four thousand people into large mortars, or building them among bricks and mortar into a wall. I say when we look back over the history of the world, and behold such characters as these, and hundreds of others equally cruel and fiend-like, and compare them with the individuals of the present age, who occupy similar positions as rulers of the world, we are at once struck with the great advancement man has made, and is still making, towards a state of peace and innocence.

When the leaders and rulers in the middle and early ages of the world, were thus cruel and blood-thirsty, what must have been the state of society among the masses? We may form some idea of it when we recollect that wars of plunder were continually carried on; neither life nor property was at any time safe; the state, kingdom, or empire, that was prosperous and flourishing one day, was laid in ruins the next. Even Greece and Rome, with all their boasted civilization and enlightenment, were no exception to these convulsive throes. In their palmiest days, a very large majority of their population were slaves; and what freemen there were, were principally warriors in active service. Wars of conquest and plunder, were their occupation, in the early stages of their power, and continued to be, until they had conquered all the surrounding countries; and then came on their in-

ternal broils; their Peloponesian and Social wars which shook them to their centres, and put an end to all their imaginary greatness. Such were Greece and Rome, in all their boasted wisdom and power. What their society was, we may imagine when we consider that the individuals who composed it, were almost universally slaves and warriors.

It indeed saddens the heart when we reflect on the history of man in times past. How shocking it is to think that man, "the lord of creation;" created for high and noble purposes, should worse than brutalize himself; and spread death and misery throughout the land. But we are lead to rejoice that a brighter day is now dawning, and that a still brighter is held in reserve for the future. It is true, we still have wars and bloodshed; but our wars are wars of principle, and the captives are no longer cruelly put to death. Governments are now regular, and life and property are in a measure secure from the attacks of roving marauders. The light of science is shining brighter, and illuming more minds than at any former period of the world's history. The stability of governments and the security of person and property are favorable to a more rapid and permanent advancement than at any former time. Many evils and miseries yet afflict the world, but they arise principally from a condition brought upon us by the action of the past. To change this condition, and place man in a natural and true position, is now the great problem of the age. Its solution was commenced by Luther and Melancthon, and has been steadily progressing ever since. It will no doubt require ages to fully solve it, but from the signs of the times its solution is sure.

LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

We have received a very interesting letter from a friend in London, Eng., from which we take the liberty to extract the following items.—[W. D.]

"Nov. 30th.—The King of Sardinia and suite arrived on a visit to this country. They left to-day, Dec. 6, 1855. They received a gracious welcome, but not comparable to that given by the French to our Queen, when she visited Paris.

The Turkish Sultan is expected here early in the coming spring. A general desire to obtain a view of these 'Lions of the day,' is quite apparent.

Leaving the Political and turning to the Religious world, I have to remark that Atheism is fearfully increasing. Perhaps the same may be said of Mormonism, in some counties, though in some portions of the country, this monster delusion is losing ground.

At Kingston, Ireland, a section of the Catholic Church, called Redemptionist Fathers, have been violating the laws, by turning public Bible-burners. The Irish Correspondent of the Christian Weekly News, says in reference to the proceedings:—"After much difficulty, decisive steps have been taken—justice invoked, and the Rev. Bible-burners, despite all their assertions of innocence and whinings about slanderous misrepresentations, are bound over to trial at the ensuing session of Court. Every evasion was tried, but when it was found that the matter must be investigated, a Papist priest, at a Sunday political meeting, openly avowed it. The fierce brutal violence, the savage threats of revenge, the numerous assaults, not on the witnesses only, but on every one identified with Protestantism, but too clearly indicate the direction and tendencies of the teachings of the Redemptionist Fathers."

Please send me two copies of your pamphlet, entitled 'Common Sense Thoughts on the Bible.' I obtained a copy of it from a friend, but while in my care, it was destroyed by an individual who looked with horror upon such a work, and, therefore, must needs commit it to the flames."

—And thus the world goes on. The teachings of the Protestant are at war with those of the Catholic, and such teachings must be forbidden. The teachings of another are at variance with the teachings of the Protestant, and his works must be destroyed. Like some of the monsters of Nature, bigotry and intolerance are inseparable; and while one clings to its ideal, the other dooms to swift destruction whatever opposes the blind idolatry, and thus they

"— wisely shut the ray
Of God's free Gospel from the simple heart,
And to the darkened mind alone impart—
One stern command—obey."

THE MARRIAGE QUESTION.

PURPOSE OF LOVE.

Love is of many kinds: Fraternal, Parental, Filial, Sexual, etc.; the kind or complexion of love depending on its object and its relations to us. There is a love which might be called the sexual courteous. It is by virtue of this that a greater degree of urbanity and tenderness universally obtains between persons of the opposite, than between those of the same sex. Conjugal love, I understand to be a union of the sexual and fraternal. Respecting the sexes, some speak of an animal love. I know of nothing of the sort. There is animal appetite, and this may be connected with sexual love, or it may not. ALL LOVE IS SPIRITUAL.

Sexual love is a rapt, romantic, refining, elevating, spiritualizing, ennobling passion. In its natural course, it leads to the sexual union and sanctifies it. When, in the course of this essay, I use the term "love," without qualification, I mean sexual love.

This love has a purpose; and what is it? The question is answered in one word—OFFSPRING. This is the whole purpose of sexual love.

"O, horrible!" exclaims some sentimental and over-refined "lady," or "gentleman." "Love! that is so pure, spiritual, holy! Have so base an end? It abhors so vile a thought as that you have uttered."

You may, but it does not. The plain, practical coupling I give it, is the end in nature, it must come to at last. The inexorable truth of our social nature is too strong for affectation.

Verily, true sexual love is just as pure, spiritual and holy, as you say; but it does not abhor the very end for which it is thus divine. We should not become too exclusively spiritual and morbidly sentimental, in this every-day, material world of ours.

We may note two features of offspring: the spiritual and physical—the soul and body. These are derived through parentage, and unless there is sufficiency of body as well as of soul in the parents, the child will be wanting in that condition which fits it for this material world. The spirit which has not an efficient body to serve its ends in this world of bodies, does not live a natural life, and fails, in part, of its destiny.

"We must not wed deformity," is a proverb "founded on the nature and fitness of things." We may be attracted to such, as friends, but not as lovers. Mental obliquity is in like manner detrimental to sexual love, except in cases where the defect in one, compensates the excess in the other. All this is significant, and every unbiased mind must at once perceive its meaning.

Love leads to union of the sexes; offspring results from the union; hence, a true love regards the physical condition of the lovers, and brings together, only such as are fitted, physiologically, as well as spiritually, to become parents to the same child. Let this be pondered. It may mean more than appears on the surface. Men may gainsay the truth, but God rules; and (excuse the seeming irreverence,) Deity is eminently practical.

Objections are made to an ardent, romantic, soul-absorbing affection. "It is a morbid manifestation of the love element, and, under proper social arrangements, would not obtain."

I maintain that it is a natural, right working of the love principle, and belongs, by unalterable law, to certain temperments and stages of development.

There is a use in this high wrought, spiritual feeling of love-regard. Its purpose is to tone down the animality of the lovers, and fit them for the sexual embrace. For two of the opposite sex, youthful, robust and vigorous, to become parents without the prerequisite of love, would be a transmission of mere animality. In their case, a refining, elevating, ennobling love is necessary for the good of the offspring. Such a love excites the

whole moral region of the brain—all the spiritual faculties of the soul. If you want to arrest the waywardness of a wild, reckless youth, present a worthy object that will inspire him with love, even to frenzy. This done, he becomes not only more capable of transmitting, but of receiving spiritual influences.

Hence, persons "in love," are more easily wrought upon, at "revivals," than if not thus affected, and vice versa. Such tempests of religious enthusiasm favor the activities of sexual love and amorous desire.

Romantic passions obtain most in youth when animality is most predominant. As age advances and the various influences of life tone down the animal nature and arouse the spiritual, the sexual love does not become so rapturous and romantic. The good of offspring does not require that it should.

LOVE MAKING.

Suppose that by advertisement or otherwise, a correspondence is brought about between two candidates for matrimony. They stand upon the same spiritual plane; he is masculine, she is feminine, and their minds are congenial. Both are ardent and imaginative; and each moulds the plastic material of an unknown lover into the ideal longed for. Sure that they love and will love truly and confidently, they meet, and not very strange to say, the spell is broken, and the parties wake up as lonely as ever; only that each, if assiduous to cultivate it, may now have an additional friendship. The tentacula of the living magnetism disregard the cool decisions of philosophy, and if duly heeded, unite such only as are fit for mutual parentage,

Nature is true to herself, and the instincts she implants, if unperverted, are infallible. An ardent imagination overheated may lead to this perversion. But oftener, the feelings are disregarded, and the union consummated because foregone conclusions, however erroneous, are satisfied. Similarity of faith and passable health of body are pretty much all that thinking persons have heretofore asked. If the assorted pair, after a few months acquaintance, can not manage to love, they know, nevertheless, that the conditions must be right, that love must eventually come, and so the irrevocable step is taken. I have little faith in scientific match-making. The various shades of temperament; the numerous faculties of the mind and their relative degrees of power, so multiply and complicate the conditions, as to render difficult, if not impossible, the practical applications of science, even if the laws were known. The delicate tests of attraction and repulsion in the parties themselves, determine the aggregate of these complex and subtle conditions, beyond anything which science can at present do. But the trouble heretofore has been, that the philosophy of the affections generally received, is little more than systemized prejudice.

Persons congenial as to intellect may always become friends, but not always lovers. Some unknown peculiarity of temperament may stand insuperably in the way. If it unfit the pair for the parental function in connection with each other, nature forbids that love shall sanctify the union.

LABOR.

'Tis the two-edged sword of sharpness;
'Tis the boots of seven-leagued stride;
'Tis the stone that turns our pewter,
Into gold, bright, pure and tried;
'Tis the hymn all Nature's singing;
'Tis the prayer God loves to hear.
He who labors, finds an answer
To his supplications, near.

W. D.

WHAT IS RELIGION?

Not masses, nor crosses, nor Catholic creeds;
 Not mumbling of aves, nor counting of beads;
 Not church-going, psalm-singing, paying of priests,
 Attendance on sermons, prayer meetings, or feasts;
 Not wearing a broadbrim, and plain thou and thee,
 Or straight-collared coat, from the world's fashion free.
 It is not to kneel with a long pious face,
 Or sing solemn anthems in some holy place;
 In sect to be cradled, or on a creed nurst,
 Believing that ev'ry outsider is cursed;
 That God has in heaven ordained us to dwell,
 But left countless millions to drop into hell.
 Religion is love in the heart and the life,
 The soother of sorrow, destroyer of strife;
 The soul's best physician;—relieves ev'ry pain,
 And in her dark cavern lights hope once again.
 It curses no one who has doubt of its creed;
 It hunts up no martyr to burn or to bleed.
 It tells of no devil with torturing chains,
 No hell of unending and horrible pains.
 It seeks not to bless men by force or by fear,
 But draws them by love, to a God ever near.
 It tells of the right, and it bids us obey;
 To happiness, virtue alone is the way;
 This world it makes happy, and then, beyond this,
 It points to another, all sunny with bliss;
 Bright heaven of beauty, how fair are thy skies!
 Thou home of the good, and thou school for the wise. W. D.

THE BATTLE OF FREEDOM.

Come up to the standard, ye good men and true,
 Ye're chosen by Freedom, she calls upon you.
 Come up to the standard, for this is the day;
 The enemy's forming in battle array.
 His banner's uplifted, around it they fly
 As birds in the Autumn, that darken the sky.
 Congress-men, senators, judges are there,
 And man-stealers many, as motes in the air;
 With rum-dealing deacons and slave-holding priests,
 As crafty as serpents, as savage as beasts;
 These all have enlisted, and all receive pay,
 The champions of virtue and freedom to slay.
 Come up to the standard ye good men and true,
 This host's to contend with, and warriors are few;
 Then haste ye from city, and village, and town,
 The battle is waging, the foe's bearing down;
 The enemy makes a grand charge to regain
 The home of his father, his ancient domain.
 Bring broad swords ye freemen, your arms daring youth,
 And fight in the cause of Jehovah and Truth;
 For one shall be able a thousand to fight,
 And two noble men put ten thousand to flight;
 Then haste to the field, let the King's work be done,
 The battle of Freedom and Truth shall be won. W. D.

THE BIBLE.

BY W. D.

The following was written in reply to an article in the Type of the Times, signed "THEOFIL," and being considered by the Editor, unsuitable for that paper, is published here.

T. The Bible agrees with the method of Nature, in imparting truth.

D. How so?

T. It has its difficulties and its mysteries.

D. So has the Koran; so has the Book of Mormon; so have all professedly sacred books; but if this is sufficient evidence to prove that a book is a revelation of the Divine will, it would be easy to prove that a thousand mysterious books are equally so.

T. Its method of instruction is not that of the philosophers.

D. Well, suppose it is not, is it any better or more truthful on that account? I know many who would regard it more favorably if its method of instruction was more like that of true philosophers; more in agreement with Nature and the developed reason of man.—I see no resemblance between Nature's method of imparting truth and the Bible method. Nature ever teaches the same truths; what it taught ten thousand years ago, it teaches now; the lessons that Socrates and Plato received, are now rehearsed to us;—no truth left out, no sentence altered. The Bible teachings are as various as its writers. The sabbath is represented by it to be so sacred that death was the penalty for a breach of its observance; and it is again represented as a thing of no importance, that may be observed or not, as each one's judgment shall dictate. Nature never contradicts itself. The Bible cannot certainly claim any resemblance here, for it contradicts itself in hundreds of places. It tells us God is no respecter of persons, and yet that he chose Jacob before he was born; elevated him above his brother, and conferred upon him peculiar favors, for no other reason than, "that the purpose of God according to election might stand." It tells us that we should hate our enemies and love them; perform our oaths, and yet above all things swear not; and represents God as the loving Father of all, and a monster vile as imagination can paint. In what respect, then, does its method of imparting truth resemble the method of Nature?

T. Its external evidence challenges belief.

D. We should like to know what this external evidence amounts to. Does it prove that Moses wrote the books that go by his name and that God inspired him to write the code of laws contained therein, many of which are so manifestly absurd, cruel and bloody?—Does it prove that the apostles wrote the contradictory accounts of Jesus, that are to be found in the Gospels? Does it prove that the amatory song of Solomon was penned under divine influence? In fact, the external evidence so much talked of, amounts to nothing; it can prove nothing of all that we so much need to have proved.

T. The Jews once were a powerful nation, and their annals are attested as none other ever were.

D. So you say; but it is so common with you to forget that such assertions require some proof. If true, it would not prove the Bible to be God's Word, but it is far from being true. From what you say, the facts of Jewish history are better attested than the facts of British history, and we have more reason for believing that God commanded the Jews to murder the men, women and children of Palestine, and that the walls of Jericho fell at the sounding of ram's horns, than we have for believing that Alfred was king of England and in many battles routed the Danes. You cannot believe your own assertion; any man of reading and reflection knows better. Where is the evidence to prove that God made a passage through the Red Sea for the flying Jews; that Joshua caused the sun and moon to stand still that the Israelites might butcher their enemies; that God endowed a

brutal man with supernatural strength; that this strength lay in his hair, and that by means of it he killed a thousand men with the jaw bone of an ass? Is there not internal and external evidence to show to an unprejudiced mind, that the Jews, as a nation, were proud, haughty and exceedingly intolerant; that they invented stories of God's interference for them to increase their self-importance and enable them to look down with scorn upon the "Gentile dogs."

T. It is absurd to suppose that Moses could palm on a whole nation, a festival like the passover, to commemorate an event that never took place.

D. Not so absurd as you may think. What would have been easier than for Joe Smith to palm upon the whole Mormon people any ceremony that he chose, in commemoration of any event mentioned in his Bible, and that too in this age of investigation and enlightenment? How much easier for Moses, in that day of ignorance, had he been so disposed? But there is no necessity for us to regard the ceremony as being so instituted. It is possible that an epidemic, at some distant period, had cut off great numbers in all the neighboring nations, and the Jews being left untouched, the Israelites to commemorate the event, instituted the passover, conceiving that their God had protected them from the destroying angel, as they termed the pestilence. Again, ceremonies are often instituted, and the occasion of their institution, in the lapse of ages, becomes entirely forgotten, when it is no difficult matter to invent a story to account for them, and no hard thing to induce the credulous or the careless to believe it.

T. Equally difficult would it have been for the apostles to tell the people, of their day, that they had seen and done what they had not seen and done.

D. Do you then know what the apostles told the people of their day? You have no evidence to prove that they told them any of the miraculous stories recorded in the Gospels. There is good reason for believing that the apostles neither preached nor wrote the marvellous things therein told, but that as the story of the Nazarene rolled, it gathered; as stories generally do. You take too much for granted which requires proof—proof too that neither you nor any other person can give.

T. Its internal evidence is ample.

D. True; but it is no evidence of its being a revelation from God, but of the contrary. Its internal evidence proves it to be contradictory in its statements of doctrines and facts, and that not once nor twice, but hundreds of times—false in philosophy, unworthy of confidence in history, unsound in logic, ignorant in science, dark, mysterious, childish and unsatisfactory. It abounds in indecent and foolish stories, ridiculous and childish conceits, and wild and extravagant accounts. There is no order in its arrangement; no unity in its style, and no connection in its argument. It contains bad grammar, bad morals and bad philosophy. It sanctions kingly tyranny; upholds slavery, and has recorded the lives of some of the vilest wretches that ever lived as patterns for us to copy. There are innumerable important moral, physical and scientific truths of which it says nothing, while a great portion of it is taken up in telling the same things over and over again, sometimes in precisely the same words, while other portions are occupied in relating what is of no use to anybody.

T. There is plain teaching enough to teach man all his duty, without his plunging into the mists of obscurity.

D. You are mistaken; there is a great portion of man's duty that the Bible does not teach, and many things that it does teach man to do are no duties at all. What does it teach respecting the laws of health and the duty of obedience to them? If it does teach anything with regard to eating and drinking in one place, it contradicts itself in another. It favors the drinking of intoxicating drinks, and it favors abstinence from them; it favors flesh-eating and abstinence from flesh; but of the great laws of health, obedience to which

is of such vital importance, it never says a word. It teaches blind and complete submission of children to parents; wives to husbands; servants to masters; and subjects to kings, destroying the will and manliness of the weaker party, and giving to the tyrant all the power he may desire. Where it gives good advice, it is done in such general terms that each man must guess for himself the method to be pursued, and there is no man but what has been plunged into "mists of obscurity" in trying to discover his duty from the Bible. Suppose a man wishes to know his duty with regard to the possession and distribution of wealth; he goes to the Bible and finds wealth spoken of as a blessing; God is represented as bestowing it upon individuals and nations as a reward for their obedience. Again, he reads, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth;" "Give to him that asketh of thee;" "Lend hoping for nothing again;" "Blessed are ye poor;" "Woe unto you that are rich;" "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Any man going to the Bible to learn his duty on this subject would be left in doubt and would of necessity return to the God-given guide within him.

T. Its books teach the same great truths.

D. The existence of the spirit after death is a great truth. One book teaches that "a man has no preeminence above a beast" and that "as the one dieth, so dieth the other;" while others teach the soul's eternity. Some books of the Bible contain no great truths at all, such as Esther's and Solomon's Song, and the differences between the teachings of other books is so great that any unprejudiced mind may discover it.

T. Its discrepancies are those of independent observers and are not contradictory.

D. If true, it would not prove the Bible to be a divine revelation any more than the agreement of separate histories of England would prove them to be divine. But what you say is not true. Read the genealogies of Matthew and Luke; the conflicting accounts of Christ's birth, his sermon, his calling of the disciples, his miracles and his resurrection.—The differences are numerous and irreconcilable and plainly show that the men who wrote the Gospels were not observers at all.

T. The character of its teachings is so exalted as almost to demonstrate its divinity. Read Christ's sermon on the Mount, for instance.

D. The character of its teachings is no more exalted than that of the teachings of Socrates, Plato, Seneca and many others. I have read Christ's sermon on the Mount—read it carefully, and find nothing in it to show that its origin was superior to man's thought. Out of the number of professing Christians existing, I know of no one who regards its teachings as being practical. Its doctrine of a particular, partial providence, gives evidence of an unexpanded intellect, though there are some good lessons taught in the whole. In conclusion, let me ask you a few questions which you may think of at your leisure.—If the Bible is a revelation from God to man, what is the reason that the All-Father has left so many of his children without it? If its teachings are so plain, how is it that Bible believers differ so widely in their views respecting them? Which Bible contains God's revelation? There being hundreds, all differing, it is important that we should know.—If the Bible is a revelation from God, does it contain the whole of his will, or only a part? If we can learn some portions of his will without such revelation, why not all? Since Bible writers erred in their conduct, they must have erred in their judgment, or been wilful sinners. If they erred in their judgment, what was there to prevent them from writing their errors? And if they were wilful wrong-doers, what confidence can we place in them? Do you know a man who makes the Bible his guide and attempts to obey ALL its teachings? Do you know any one who attempts to obey literally all the New Testament commands? If he does not obey them literally, what is it that tells him they should not be so obeyed? If it is his reason, is he not making reason his guide?

INFIDEL REPENTANCE AND WHAT IT PROVES NOT.

Heard a Methodist preacher lately, and he preached a Methodist sermon. There was nothing startling (or revolutionary!) in it—nothing original; it was that good old kind of sermon we might have heard about the time this preacher was born. It was mild and humanitarian in its tone, and in this respect, far superior to some discourses I have been privileged to hear from the same sacred box. The sermon was a tilt against liberalism, and it attempted logic and reason, but here as usual, the failure was signal. It was a successful sermon though. Its calm, insinuating manner and its specious sophistry answered all the purposes of the speaker. Such attempts are powerless only where there is intelligence enough in the hearer to detect the weaknesses. Sophistry and declamation are often more powerful with certain classes, than the consistent presentation of truth.

The preacher didn't seem to know the difference between a "school" which was negative in its want of faith, and a "school" which is positive in the fullness of its faith, and so he pronounced the names of two or three "infidels" of the last century, repeated the clerical slanders as to their lives, depicted the horrors of their death-bed scenes;—and he did it all to bring into discredit those reformatory efforts which are destined, at no distant day, to lessen very much the demand for such wares as fashionable clergymen bring to the market-place of fear and superstition.

I am quite inclined to be sceptical as to much that is said of the death-bed scenes of "infidels." I am much disposed to suspect some of them as pious frauds to save a "wicked generation," or rather as clerical inventions to save the consequence and quarterage of the inventors. But although there may be romance in these terrible narratives, still, like most romances, they are doubtless "founded on fact." Some of those in the latter half of the 18th century, who opposed the popular theology, like many who defended it, led vicious lives, and such when they come to die, are not apt to evince much rapture, either at the prospect or the retrospect. Admitting that all which is told be true, still the facts don't prove what the preachers want them to prove, or I have not read the records aright.

That he who is called an infidel or Universalist repents his faith or want of faith, on his death-bed, and is unhappy for the course of his past life, unblesed of the oracles of popular theology, is no proof whatever that popular theology is true. Opposers of fashionable religions, rather than recant, have suffered martyrdom. But this does not prove the truths of the dogmas died for; it is evidence only of the martyr's sincerity. That individuals have triumphantly died for conflicting faiths, is a fact which no intelligent person will deny; or that martyrdom may be thus endured, is a possibility—a probability even—which no one acquainted with human nature, will call in question. Atheists have suffered martyrdom for their opinions; but this don't prove the truth of Atheism. The Eastern devotee throws himself before the wheels of Juggernaut, and is crushed to death; the Hindoo widow piously and heroically ascends the funeral pile and is consumed with the dead body of her husband; but these voluntary sacrifices don't confirm the religion of Brahma.

Now, while there are some who don't shrink from death for the same opinions of which others repent on their death-beds, then, most certainly, is the fact of repentance logically impotent to prove the truth of the opinions now embraced, or the falseness of those repented of.

But there is another consideration in this connection, and a most important one it is too. It has been observed that when persons are near dying, they are apt to use the language first learned, however many they may have learned and spoken since. During the prevalence of yellow fever at Philadelphia, Dr. Rush observes that an Italian, in the beginning of his illness, spoke English; in the middle of it, French; but on the day of his death

only Italian. He had learned successively, Italian, French and English, but in his last hours, spoke only the language of his infancy. Dr. Johnson, when it came his turn to die, laid aside his own majestic rhetoric and the Latin hymns he loved so well, "and was heard with his sinking voice, muttering a child's prayer which he had learned on his mother's knee." A Lutheran clergyman, of Philadelphia, observed that the Germans and Swedes of his congregation, when near death, always prayed in their native languages, though some who did so, had not spoken them for fifty or sixty years.

In all these examples, as the patients grew weak, they seemed to approach the condition of their childhood; and if they became children again, in the use of language, why might not a Voltaire become the child he once was in the fear and trembling of a terrible theology, and recant his philosophy, whenever bodily weakness had rendered his mind unfit to appreciate it, only to return to the faith of his manhood on recovery, again to fall whenever the disease unmanned him?

Now, here are two cases: 1, the return to childhood, in the use of language; 2, the return to childhood, in the terrors of an infantile faith. I conclude, therefore, that the retailers of those hobgoblin stories of the death-bed remorse of rational philosophers, have wholly failed to establish their point. When I am told of the man who, under physical torture and debility, became a child in the terrors of the child's faith, I think of the man who became a child under like circumstances, in the use of the child's language;—and who can blame me?

Our clerical logic runs thus: Orthodox devotees die in the triumph of faith, therefore, orthodoxy is true and points out the only road to happiness here and hereafter. But this proves too much, as the following obituary notices show:—

BORN INTO THE SPIRIT WORLD.

"In Waterford, on the morning of Friday, the 22d June, 1855, at the residence of her brother-in-law, John Proper, Miss Albertine Hicks exchanged her mortal for her immortal home, in the 26th year of her age.

"Miss Hicks was endeared to her many friends, by her gentle disposition and great kindness of heart. During her long and painful illness, which was borne with uncommon patience and fortitude, she became acquainted with and ardently embraced the spiritual philosophy as made known to her, principally through the mediumship of Mr. Proper. Herself a partial medium, she often felt the soothing influence of her spirit-friends who seemed to be constantly around, preparing her for the great change so soon to take place; and it was with a joyful heart she received the welcome summons to lay aside her mortal garments for the brighter robes of immortality."

"Departed this life, at Fairfield, Conn., on Friday evening, March 6, 1855. Margaret, wife of Almon Roff, aged 53.

"Mrs. Roff had been in feeble health for some years, but since January her physical powers rapidly declined. As the change gradually approached, she relapsed in a semi-unconscious state, and for some days manifested but little disposition to notice her friends or other objects in the external world. During this time she probably sustained more intimate relations to the sphere of spiritual existence. About two days previous to her final departure from the body, she was aroused to a state of outer consciousness, and called her friends to her bedside. She assured them that Spiritualism was true, and exhorted them to believe. Her departed relatives and friends she affirmed had been to her to prepare her mind for the transition, and they would come again and take her with them.—This lucid period was soon over. Gradually she became apparently oblivious of outward scenes, and her spirit passed away,

'Calmly as to a night's repose,
Like flowers at set of sun.'

"Born into the spirit world, at his late residence, in New Haven, Oswego Co., N. Y., Feb. 3, 1855, Hezekiah Nichols, aged 65 years. His last illness was inflammation of the lungs. He had been a resident here for the last 40 years, having left a dear family and a numerous circle of very near and dear friends to feel deeply his absence, as a husband,

father and brother, and in short, most truthfully and beautifully exemplifying, in his daily life, in private and in public, at home and abroad, the rare quality of a positive Christian life. * * * * *

"He was in the fullest and most truthful sense, a Spiritualist, and left the form as he lived, peaceful, not having to wait to give his testimony alone in his last hours of weakness of body upon a dying bed, but letting his life speak, which proved not merely that he believed, but knew not only in whom he believed, but the truth of Spirit-intercourse, testifying as with one of old, 'we have come to an innumerable company of ministering spirits.' He was not one who sought for outward manifestations to convince, but with him it was a progressive growth out of his more material nature, in which he was early shrouded in common with his brother man. In his early days he united with an orthodox church and was long an active member, but in 1838 was led to renounce and shake off its sectarian dogmas and consequent material darkness; since which time he has not failed in meekness, love and faithfulness, in public and in private, to proclaim himself an uncompromising enemy to every form of tyranny over the immortal spirit of man; and that he could no longer starve on the husks of materialism, fed out in Jerusalem temples or material mounts of Sammaria, but drank of that fountain that was in him, springing up into everlasting life. And while he bore this testimony in private and public ministrations, 'the common people heard him gladly,' bearing unmistakable evidence to the intuitive perceptions of man, that, although not a priest after the order of a carnal commandment, he was truly one after the power of an endless life."

There are thousands of living witnesses to just such examples as these. They are of frequent occurrence, and notices thereof appear weekly in our spiritual journals. I don't quote them to prove Spiritualism by any means, but to show that the devotees, not of orthodoxy only, but of the most heretical faiths, depart this life triumphantly. Swedenborgians, Rationalists, Universalists, Harmonists, Spiritualists and all other "heretical" believers, who live conscientious lives, are quite as likely to pass from earth peacefully and happily, and some of them far more so, than are the disciples of orthodoxy.

Now if our agreeable little preacher had been intelligent enough to have known these facts and their logical bearings, and candid enough to have given them proper moral weight, he would not have perpetrated a sermon, so sadly exposed to criticism. We shall send him a copy of this review, and if he still persist in the sophistry, it may be fairly concluded that he is wanting in the candor or logical acumen necessary to see the facts in their manifest analogies. But "reason" is often maligned in the pulpit, and it is not strange that every shape of sophistry lurks in the sanctuaries of superstition. But our clergymen generally should be careful how they presume upon the ignorance of their hearers, for light is spreading, and the less prejudiced and more intelligent, seeing the weakness of a position, such as we have just examined, will suspect a similar weakness in the other bulwarks of orthodoxy; and thus, one by one, will the dogmas perish and the craft and glory of their defenders pass away forever. Let them beware!

SECTS.—What would become of mankind if all sects were destroyed? When the soul by whom they were formed in its childhood, sees proper to throw them off, it will be prepared, in its manhood, to put on better fitting and more beautiful apparel. Underneath all these institutions—Methodism, Quakerism, Catholicism, Mahomedanism—lies the soul as the soil beneath the wheat crop, and when the present growth disappears, a nobler one will take its place. No poison can kill the truth; no medicine can save a lie. God's life blood circulates through the one, and it is immortal as himself; the other came from nothing, and thither must it go, though it drag one half of what the world calls great and good along with it.

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM.

BERLIN HEIGHTS, Erie Co., O., Dec. 1855.

FRIEND PATTERSON:—I make the following extract from a letter recently written by a very independent, reflective and conscientious woman, who has given the subject referred to, a patient and thorough investigation. I know of no person I could more joyfully welcome to the ranks of the advocates of Freedom. With such friends our cause is sure to triumph.

"I wish to tell you how increasingly beautiful the principle of FREEDOM looks to me. How many are laboring in the cause of freedom, who have scarcely a glimpse of the full meaning of the term! I see now more clearly than I did at the time, why you contended so earnestly for "FREEDOM FIRST," and that in freedom the question of one, or a plurality, or succession of loves, must be decided. I am still as much of a monogomist in theory as ever;—that seems to me, to be the highest idea of sexual relation and that all will, in the distant future, see it so. But it is not for me to say that those whose ideas of the HIGHEST LIFE differ from mine, are less pure in heart or sanguine in belief. I am perfectly satisfied to let time and a progressive nature decide. I admit also that what is the highest life for one, MAY not be for another, either now, or in a higher state of development."

Who, save a bigot, does not, from the heart, respond to this sentiment? And yet, to endorse this sentiment, is to endorse fully and emphatically, the doctrine of Free Love.

The representations of the doctrine of Free Love, which meet us at every hand, are excessively amusing, notwithstanding the disgust and pity which they excite. Judging from some of these representations, one would conclude, that in order to carry out the doctrine of freedom, every man must, "in duty bound," be attracted sexually to every woman of his acquaintance, and every woman must "submit" to every "demand" made upon her!* (It is the WIFE and not the free woman who must "submit" to every "demand" made upon her!) Humiliating as is the task, the advocate of Freedom must explain that he is simply in favor of FREEDOM(!) and that he has no idea of compelling people to love more than they are inclined to, as they are now compelled to love less. The truth is, people have always been used to arbitrary arrangements, and they can think of nothing else. They consider that it belongs to society, to mark out the path its members are to follow, and if monogamy is no longer to be the rule, why, of course, polygamy or promiscuous sexual intercourse, or something else, must be. But let us labor on in hope; for while there are none so low as to be unfit to enjoy freedom, there are probably none so dull that they may not, in process of time, be made to comprehend freedom.

The advocates of freedom believe in Nature, and feel sure that in freedom, Nature will be obeyed. Hence, our whole duty is to contend for freedom. Freedom we DEMAND.—We give the supporters of the present vile system notice, that we ask no favors. Marriage we shall destroy. We shall then obey our attractions. We shall then know who we can love, and how well. Till then, FREEDOM is our only watchword. F. BARRY.

PRESIDENT PIERCE ON REFORM.—In reference to Massachusetts and kindred States, President Pierce, in his Annual Message, says:—"Although conscious of their inability to heal admitted and palpable social evils, of their own, and which are completely within their jurisdiction, they engage in the offensive and hopeless undertaking of reforming the domestic institutions of other States, wholly beyond their control and authority." This is one of the best hits of the Message, and if the "social evils of their own" refer to hireling and marriage slavery(!), we say amen! We deplore and execrate chattel slavery, but that don't justify us in overlooking the slaveries at home. Let us take the mote out of our own eye first; but the penchant is to look abroad for evils to correct. It is so comfortable "to wrap ourselves up in the cloak of self-righteousness."

* See various popular journals.

STYLE.—BREVITY, PRECISION, CLEARNESS.

Since a monthly of 32 pages will not admit a very large amount of matter, it should be filled with the very best. Our journal is radical and not intended for those who read merely for amusement. It is meant for use in suggesting thought and arousing to action. It will hardly be possible, therefore, to give much encouragement to young writers, however much we might wish to do so. Those who write fancy articles for pastime, would find a better market for their productions elsewhere. But some thinkers are not practiced writers, and an original thought will be acceptable always, whatever its dress.—Long articles, unless full of thought and interest, are always objectionable. Nobody has time to read such. The style of beginners is apt to be too diffuse. It is the ambition of many to make a long article rather than a good one; but such articles are as worthless as the Pharisee's long prayers. Writing which is done as a task, is seldom done well.—When the intellect is aroused and the thought is clamorous for expression, the writing gives pleasure, and so does the reading.

But I'm not sure after all, but there's ambition enough to figure as writers, without giving it much encouragement. Beginners should be content to write for their immediate friends and to re-write over and over again for themselves, until they are better prepared to appear before the public, than they often are when they attempt it.

If it be reputation that any one is after, a few brief, terse and telling paragraphs will do more for him than a whole magazine of windy, wordy, wishy-washy twaddle would. Every one who writes should aim to condense. He may express much thought, if he can, but should do it in the fewest words possible. A transparent style through which the thought and feeling look honestly into your soul, is the best for any purpose. It may not enchant you at first glance, but it will stand wear.

Ornament has its place certainly, and it should not be overlooked. It rests the authority for its use in the "nature and fitness of things," and, like any good quality of style, has its law of brevity. Clearness of expression is incompatible with a multitude of words, and clearness is essential even to ornament.

The use of general terms, when we wish to express definite ideas, makes a flat, sleepy style, and is a common fault, especially in spiritual literature. If our ambition be for a style graphic, fresh and sprightly, we must make our thought precise and give it the benefit of the exact word.

We may be as comprehensive in thought, as refined in sentiment and as intense in feeling as we may, but unless the expression be pure and precise, it will not be impressive. "Brevity is the soul of wit," and the "points" of style cannot appear without it. A friend suggests that Queen Anne's idea was a good one. A celebrated divine preached before her, and she liked the sermon, but thought it a pity he had not had time to make it shorter.

If the writer of this article should fail in what he recommends, it will be but another proof of the fact that "it is easier to preach than practice."

DARKE COUNTY ARRAIGNED.—In an article in the Spiritual Messenger, it is claimed on authority, that there is not "common sense or common honesty amongst the people of Darke County in sufficient quantities to sustain any such thing as Union Stores." And said article furthermore asserts the probability that, "the Ohio people in general are much ELEVATED literally and figuratively above the dead level of DARKE COUNTY."

As to "common honesty" or a strict regard for the conventional standard of right, we feel well assured that our neighborhood here in Darke County, would compare favorably with any other in Ohio, or elsewhere, not formed by concerted immigration. And as to the "common sense" in the case, it will be time to decide that, once the subject of Union Stores has been agitated amongst our people. What our neighborhood and thousands of others in every section of the Union want, is, not aspersion, but agitation. It is by this means that the native capacity to appreciate, must be developed into actual appreciation.

EXTREMES.

BY L. H. BIGAREL.

Much is said now-a-days about extremes, and it might be well to get a better understanding of the matter. The conflicting ideas which prevail are not a little amusing to a philosophical mind, and here commences the investigation of the causes producing diversity of character. The undeveloped mind looks upon every unusual mental manifestation as an eccentricity, growing out of the oddities or peculiarities of the individual, without associating any known principle in Nature. And here may be traced the cause of the tyranny of popular opinion, which recognizes no constitutional differences in mind. Take for instance, the following:—

"The model character is a complete blending of the individual with the surrounding and controlling element, with no sharp points to alienate him from others, in opinion and external appearance; moderate 'in all things,' and not predisposed to fanciful illusions, which tend to abstraction; no advocate of a peculiar philosophy unthought of by others; no disorganizer of SACRED institutions; a profound venerator of authority and the law; is a conservator of public good and willing to sacrifice manhood to necessity; not contentions and disposed to create discord by the advocacy of peculiar doctrines; a 'peace-maker.'

"This is a model for you to study and imitate. These straying propensities of crazy people must be checked. This want of deference to the sanctity of popular opinion must be corrected. It is not in taste. You must respect others more. We insist upon less of your saucy, dignified independence."

And thus reasons the world. Being itself on a low plane of intellectual and spiritual existence, it would bind the expanding mind to its own sphere. It will not accede to new demands, because it perceives no needs. It cannot see the growing wants of a higher state of being. Here is a man, an agriculturist, who lives a quiet, retired life; attends to his concerns, and is a peaceful member of the community. Yet, with all, he is peculiarly independent-minded—disregards conventional law and is an infidel to the popular faith. More; he proposes a scheme of Social Reorganization—a dissolution of old forms for a change in the life conditions of individuals to promote fraternity and establish a Universal Brotherhood. For this, public sentiment is arrayed against him, to crush efforts at practical realization. He is accounted an ultraist, with views of a dangerous tendency. Thus, he fails to receive his award, because unappreciated and misunderstood. He is viewed in the extreme and condemned without due hearing.

The truth claiming our attention in the foregoing remarks, has reference to the degrees of mental and spiritual development. The individual of uncommonly developed reflectives and perceptives will rise in his views above the surface thoughts of the masses.—He lives a higher life, and from his lofty position, scans the world of mind, and accords to true merit its due. He assumes not his attitude in ostentation, but from the impulsion of the soul's outgrowth, in its attempts to grasp sublime, eternal truths.

But is this incongruity in human action really surprising? The action of mind is subject to fixed laws, and every manifestation must be controlled by some deep, underlying principle. System obtains in all the realms of God's Universe, and the mind who is incapable of tracing any connection in the central forces controlling matter, is yet unacquainted with the most sublime truths in Nature. Our actions are but an outer expression of inner conditions.

Generally an idea is an association of the common understanding with custom or usage; in its highest sense, it is a truth engendered from the Infinite, projected through interior organs into consciousness, and thence through external organs into speech. Men adhere

to common ideas and become so absorbed in their surroundings, that ideas from the Infinite source of all thought, opening into the freshness, beauty and grandeur of a higher life, do not occur to them. Inspiration of thought belongs to few, and under its power, these act, feel and think unlike the great masses.

LOVE OF THE WORLD.

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.”

I like not the text; it savors too much of monkish austerity, and sounds like misery's voice, issuing from her gloomy cave, on a dull November morning. He who loves God can hardly help loving his beautiful world and the beautiful things he has placed in it.—I pity the man who is so priest-ridden, that he cannot, or so apostle-ridden that he would not, love the bright world in which God's love has placed him. He who loves the world is in no wise less prepared to love God and his brothers, than he who believes that “sullen gloom is sterling true devotion.”

How pitiable it is to think, that under the influence of such passages of scripture, as the above, millions of human beings have closed up the natural fountains of their souls, and gone through the world dry and withered trunks, instead of budding, blooming men and women, blessing and being blessed. Men have been afraid to love their wives; women have trembled at the love they felt for their children, and dreaded lest their jealous God should destroy those objects which called out the natural feelings of the soul. The gods of the heathen shall perish; the idols of wood and stone, of brass and iron shall decay and be no more remembered; the devotee of Juggernaut shall be amazed at his own folly; and just as certainly shall the gods of Christendom die; the angry, jealous, mean, revengeful, little-souled gods, the work of foolish priests, the idols of their ignorant imaginations, shall vanish, and the Infinite Father of the Universe be loved by all his intelligent children.

W. D.

REFORM FOR REFORMERS.—There seems to be need for Reformers to reform in the following respects:—

1. In looking abroad for evils to correct. Let reform like charity begin at home.
2. In striving too exclusively for intellectual and spiritual development. Let us not forget the body, but cultivate our physical energies, and educate the whole man. It is integral growth we want. Fragmentary culture is not compatible with individual progress.
3. In depending too much on others, for the means of life. We have hands and should use them in productive industry, in the workshop, field, or garden, else we are sinners.—Let us place ourselves in circumstances of independence,—upon the soil, if we can; draw our subsistence therefrom, and pluck from our own vine and fruit-tree; then may we utter unwelcome truth, and none shall hinder or make us afraid. Supplying our own needs in independence, we dare be men.
4. In not cordially granting toleration to those of different faith. There is too much sectism even amongst Reformers. We assume to be right ourselves, and all others wrong, and we treat them as the abettors of error. We forget that the knowledge of truth is progressive; and that what suits one plane of mind, may not suit another. Above all things we insist upon tolerance for the faith and works of others. Every one must be allowed to engineer the Road to Happiness for himself.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

Reading a few days ago Goodrich's History of the United States, I was struck with a passage on page 170, which reads thus: "And who will affirm that the unusual age to which the signers [of the Declaration of American Independence] as a body attained, was not a reward bestowed upon them for their fidelity to their country, and the trust which they in general reposed in the over-ruling providence of God? Who can doubt the kindness of that Providence to the American people in thus prolonging the lives of these people, till the principles for which they had contended, through a long series of years, had been acknowledged, and a government had been founded thereon?" Now here is a history, written expressly for schools, inculcating as a truth that which is a most mischievous falsehood. If Providence prolonged the lives of some of these men, why not all? Why was Thomas Lynch cut off at thirty years of age, John Penn at forty-seven, others at forty-eight, fifty, etc., while some lived to be ninety and upwards? Why did not Providence continue them all alive till now, and thus stamp the seal of truth upon this miracle, and confound all tyrants and unbelievers in special providence, forevermore? It is true the signers of the Declaration lived to a great age; it is said that the average length of their lives was 65 years, but was there no natural reason for this, that a supernatural one had to be found? As a body they were men of good judgment, of temperate habits and strong constitutions, received from their hardy forefathers, and strengthened by manly toil; they neither wore themselves out by intemperance, nor rusted out with indolence, and the natural consequence of this obedience to physical law, was health and old age.

If Providence lengthened the lives of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, why did it not lengthen the lives of the fighters for independence? Why suffer one hundred and forty noble-hearted men to fall at Bunker's Hill? Why not save the thousands that lost their lives in upholding that declaration? If Providence does lengthen the lives of men, when they stand up for Freedom and Truth, surely those were the men to expect it. If the British had once found the American army bullet-proof and death-proof, all war would have stopped at once; Peace and Freedom would have smiled in every home, and tyrants, in all ages, would have heard of it and trembled. Such notions of Providence are mischievous; they lead people to imagine that if God's moral laws are obeyed, his physical laws may be set at defiance with impunity, and yet nothing can be more false, and every day's experience proves it. They also lead people to think that Providence shortens men's lives; for if it lengthens them for one purpose, why not shorten them to answer some other purpose; Hence, when a man gets drunk, falls into the river and is drowned, the exclamation is, "what a mysterious Providence!" If a boiler bursts and kills a hundred persons, Providence is the agent, though the engineer is often severely blamed and punished, at the same time.

If we obey the law, the reward is ours; if we disobey, we fall into its jaws, and are sometimes sorely bitten; and we might as well attempt to run from under the bending heavens, as to escape from the penalty when the law is broken. Any doctrines contrary to this, universal experience proves to be false, and all books teaching them, are injurious to the reader, unless he is sufficiently advanced to know better. We need an entirely new set of school books, free from sectarian bias, and teaching the everlasting laws of Nature; and we shall have it. Reformers! labor, and the work shall be done.

W. D.

The night is pregnant with the day;
The storm is father of the calm;
And battle's hot and bloody fray
Heralds the conqueror's crowning palm.

W. D.

SP. COM. ON THE MARRIAGE QUESTION.

ALFRED CRIDGE, MEDIUM.

Nothing is more common than to estimate the condition of the human race prospectively by the false position and unnatural relations in which we are now placed. But nothing is more calculated to lead to incorrect conclusions, as to the ultimate destiny of the Race, both in sexual and in other relations, than to suppose, that what is true of the Race, in their present relations and position, is also true in regard to their permanent and really natural states. Were the marriage relation to be adjusted in conformity to present organizations, it would be a very low phase, not much above the lower animals in its nature and practical results. The ideal standard of a true marriage relation is now about as correct as it can be; but to attempt adapting to that standard, existing men and women would be as absurd as to endeavor to carry five hundred weight on their shoulders, because men who live aright and develop their muscular powers for several generations in succession, might have the power to carry as much;—this is now done by the porters of Smyrna.

The difference between the advocates of the old scheme of marriage and those who call themselves reformers, is simply this: the former wish to compel an outward conformity to a true ideal; this, in the present state of things, is impossible; the capacities of mankind for forming true matrimonial relations, being but small, owing to existing educational systems. The latter assume that the present perverted tastes and appetites of men, are correct indications of what true marriage relations should be. They speak as if none should strengthen their muscles to carry any more than they now can; that nature says, we are to be weak, because we are weak. The former says, that because under a proper system, we should be able to carry four hundred weight, therefore, we must carry it now. Both are wrong. In a reformed society, the spirit and the flesh are no longer at war.—Both will point in the direction of a true conjugal and social order, which will be on earth as in the world of existences, where affinities rule supremely and outward circumstances bend to them.

There is one way, and only one way, to attain true conjugal relations, in the generality of cases: it is to organize a true social order, as a basis. As long as circumstances are discordant, so men and women will be to each other, even if inwardly harmonious. Take away the causes of discord, and the majority of matrimonial relations would approximate correctness. But what breeds discord, at present, between married parties, is not so much a want of conjugal relationship to each other, as to a false social order and diseased physical organizations; causing unnatural cravings because of the undue supply of natural wants.

These natural wants being supplied other things will right themselves. The propriety of relaxing considerably the present marriage bonds, is not questioned by our circle; but only a few among recent arrivals see any necessity for the agitation of the marriage question as a fundamental idea in practical reform, as in a true social order, all would be adjusted without special effort, and there is no advantage in doing work twice over, and frightening people with horrors which will never exist.

REMARKS BY A.C.—The mode of adjusting matrimonial relations in civilized life, by which an institution—a shadow—is made to crush natural and sensitive beings, reminds me of the following anecdotes:

An Indian became a convert to what is called Christianity. He had two wives to whom he was much attached. The missionary told him that he must give up one. The Indian begged hard to be excused, but the iron morality(?) of the Calvinist recognized no human sympathies. One of the wives was repudiated. A few weeks passed, and she died of a broken heart—tortured to death, a sacrifice to the Moloch of civilization.

A New Zealander became a convert to Christianity; but the circumstance of his having two wives was a barrier also in his case. In vain he pleaded—the missionary was inexorable, he could not be admitted as a member of the Church, and he went away sorrowing and perplexed. A few days afterward he came back to the missionary with a joyful countenance. "Me good Christian now: me no have but one wife" "What did you do with the other?" asked the missionary. "Eat 'em," was the innocent reply of the new convert.

"Things have been in the saddle" almost long enough.

SPIRIT COUNSEL.

The spirits are much looked to now-a-days for practical wisdom. They are sought in counsel for private and public good; and this is all very natural, considering the circumstances under which we have been educated. Communion with this unseen source of intelligence has interest certainly, and, as I am quite inclined to think, its peculiar uses, too; but the wisdom of looking to this source for counsel respecting the practical affairs of life, may be questionable. We can only decide this by a careful study of the laws which control the character of the communications.

I announce the proposition that: The laws upon which depend the character of spiritual communications are very nearly analogous to, it not identical with the laws upon which depend the character of thought.

I. If a group of spirit-seekers with mediums in sympathy, have very decided prejudices in favor of any dogma, the spirits will confirm them. They are confident in the fullness of their superstition, and the spirits tell them what they want to know. Let this same group attempt to reason upon the same subject, and invariably will their logic bring them to their cherished dogmas.

II. Thus with the decidedly prejudiced; but how with one that is partially liberalized? Upon some bright morning, a new thought which controverts a whole bevy of prejudices gleams upon his mind, and he don't like its obtrusive bearing, but tries to thrust it out of the sacred temple of his mind. It will return, however, despite his efforts, and he is compelled, at last, to look it fairly in the face. Beyond all expectation, it begins to seem friendly; he likes it better the more he courts its acquaintance, until finally he takes it into full companionship, and holds it an inseparable part and parcel of himself, so dear is it.—An individual of similar mental condition, gives the spirits audience in a circle of like character with himself, and a new idea is developed—an idea he was not looking for—and which he thinks mischievous and wrong;—he is inclined to reject it; hesitates, but begins to think about it candidly and earnestly. Other spirits visit the circle and urge the same thought, until at last it is cordially received. The mental revelation in the one case, and the spiritual revelation in the other, seem to be governed by laws which are analogous if not identical.

III. We will take the case of a confirmed radical. Accustomed to revolutionary thought he is in expectancy of such, and at times they pour upon his mind thick and fast. He has triumphed over many a prejudice; he loves conquest in the dominions of truth and he goes forward with the strides of an Achilles. He is self-reliant, and, as a philosopher, appeals to the spirits. The philosophers of the heavens respond and suggest revolutionary radicalism as profusely as his own mind had previously been in the habit of doing. The spirits may divulge much that is new to him; but his own mind had often done the same. The same law which rules in the one instance, seems also to rule in the other. If it be assumed that in the one instance, spirits suggested to the mind internally, and, in the other, externally, I shall not object at all. The assumption would be entirely in accordance with our proposition.

If those who are merely affectional, commune with spirits, there will be merely an interchange of kindly feelings. The seekers want love, not thought, and they get what they want. A Presbyterian preacher in Massachusetts questions the spirits, and their answers are unexceptionably Presbyterian. A Methodist preacher in Pennsylvania gets Methodism, and thus it is that all theologies may get spiritual confirmation. Puritans seek and get their views of marriage; harmonial philosophers and Swedenborgians theirs; Fourierists theirs, and thus the world round.

The spiritual revelations which any group of persons receive, are merely the reflection

of the predominant mentality of the group, just in the same manner as the thoughts of an individual correspond to the predominant condition of his mentality. There is this analogy in the evolution of principle; and the same law obtains in regard to the revelation of fact. Prophecy is internally unfolded to the mind and outwardly revealed to the senses as well.

If it be true that the spiritual response corresponds as in normal thought to the state of mentality; then is spiritualism no very authoritative source of wisdom theoretical or practical. Let us test it.

The husband is in California and the wife has grown weary of his absence. She longs for the soothing balm of masculine sympathy, and one of her friends is ready to accord it. Mediums themselves; they consult the spirits, and obtain consent as a matter of course. It matters nothing as to the right or wrong of the step; if the parties desire it, whatever its character, the spirits will grant their wish.

I am quite aware that habitual wrong-doers have received advice which made a great change for the better in their lives; and they seemed very grateful for it. A pedler is called to a useful and honest occupation; a spendthrift and idler is called to industry and frugality; a drunkard is reclaimed, &c.

This class of phenomena may obtain under the following conditions: First, when the friends are spirit-seekers and anxiously concerned for the delinquent; and secondly, when the wrong-doer himself is conscious of the delinquency and has better moods of mind when he ardently longs for moral supremacy and the happiness which belongs thereto. In the one case the spirit-advice came to appreciating friends; in the other, it came by virtue of the delinquent's own appreciating moods. The fact that he reformed in either case, is evidence that there was a basis in his mind for the reception of redeeming counsel. When depraved tastes rule in the circle, the communications are vile without a redeeming quality.

Let us imagine a group of Socialists to whom a suitable locality is an object. The spirits are consulted in all sincerity, and the answer is such as corresponds to the preponderating judgement and imagination of the circle. One group has had two locations pointed out in this way, and failed to settle on either. Some such groups, too, are prone to inquire as to the qualifications of certain individuals for cooperation, and here as in all cases where there is sincerity in the querists, the answer will be no better than such as the highest wisdom of the group could have devised; and if there be a magnetic predominance in the circle, of a lower wisdom, the answer will not be so good.

Those who are wildly fanatical will find spirits enough to favor their wishes. Thus, God and the angels led Harris, Scott and Co., to Mountain Cove, but the elements were soon dispersed, and the Mount of God was not established.

In all cases will we be answered according to the measure of our wisdom and not otherwise. If vain and ambitious, the spirits will play the sycophant; and if we have a hobby, the spirits will help us ride it.

The fact, therefore, that the spirits favor any practical movement by their especial guardianship, is no evidence of superior wisdom or success in its management or results. The investing of any reform or movement, however, with the prestige of spiritual guidance, I have no doubt would swell the train of espousers; but in this I could not discern the promise of success; since many would be allured by the witchery of angel leadership, who who would be wholly unqualified by the want of inward fitness for the revolutionary adventure. The authority of angels is specious, external and apt to be delusive. Herein lies the hidden source of future trouble and splendid failure. To avert the danger, we invoke the strong arm of the worker, and the sturdy, sound sense of the practical mind.

I should certainly interpose no objection to frequent communion with unseen intelligences upon the question of Societary Reform, or any other. The more rationally it be done,

more good will result. I should expect beneficial results somewhat as follows:—

1. There must be harmony in the circle before the responses can be satisfactory, and this must have a good effect upon the seekers.

2. Such converse upon questions of interest is an excitant to the mind, and new thoughts may be struck out, and new modes of action suggested, whether coming directly from professed spirits or not.

3. If we believe that exalted spirits sympathize with our holiest aspirations and most earnest efforts, the faith would be grateful and spiritually exalting.

4. Notwithstanding discrepancies in the manifestations, there is a pretty general concurrence as to the philosophy of life here and hereafter. The reason, as it appears to me, why it is so, is because the more liberal and advanced minds are those who cultivate and give publicity to the spiritual disclosures. These teaching far beyond those of acknowledged human origin, excite an interest in the public generally, and are starting many minds upon the pathway of progress, who under other circumstances, might have been standing still.

The excitant in such cases seems to be rather an outward one; but deride external applications as we will, they seem to be useful as irritants, stimulants, and tonics. They act by a law similar to that by which, the putting of the body into the attitude of an emotion, tends to excite that emotion.

But after all it is not wise to rely upon externalities. We are not to be lifted up by outward force; and all wisdom is not to be infused into our minds by objective methods. The means of development must act through the centre of our being as an incentive to the unfolding of the human spirit, that it may rise by the innate forces of its own essential nature. We should look within our own selfhood formed by all our past experiences, for wisdom, and not to any outward source, as a finality—not even to the spirits—not to the heavens!

NOTE.—This article may be deemed open to criticism, and if so, we shall be happy to consider any objections which may be made thereto. We have treated the subject with much brevity, and may be misunderstood in consequence. We ask a careful reading before judgement is given. This subject needs to be better understood.

ABOUT REFORMERS.—The very word "Reformer" implies activity. A reformer is one who is active in the abolition of wrong and the establishment of right. Those who profess reform and act not, are dead heads on the car of progress. There are all grades of reformers from those who are just feeling their way out from general conservatism, to such as stand in the forefront of radicalism; from the anti-alcohol reformer to the ultra social reformer. All these should tolerate each other; and it is a pity they should ever indulge in mutual depreciation. It is the prerogative of persecution, time out of mind, to set upon innovation. Moderate reformers too often persecute those who are more ultra; and these in turn are too apt to forget the uses of moderation and compromise in the reformatory efforts of others. All have their appointed work to do, and each must labor in the sphere of his attractions. They are all laborers in the field of progress for the great work of human redemption. The ultra and radical are absolutely indispensable as pioneers in the pathway of human progress; and the more temperate and conciliating who consult expediency are equally indispensable to the activities of progress amongst the masses of men; and the one should thank God for the redeeming toil of the other.

A SEDENTARY FQIBLE.—Much of the exacting fastidiousness of the learned and scientific, is due to the fact that their native proclivities and every day habits keep them to books and brain-work within doors, and hence, they run too much to nerve and sensitiveness. They need the callisthenics of field and workshop in breeze and sunshine to invigorate the body, calm the nerves, and make the man all over natural.

MY SOUL'S THRALLDOM AND ITS DELIVERANCE. AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY ANNE DENTON CRIDGE.

CHAPTER II.

THE SIN OF BEING HAPPY AND JOYOUS;—RELIGION AND MISERY;—ANECDOTES OF METHODIST PREACHERS AND OTHERS;—CONVERSIONS AND BACKSLIDINGS;—BOGS, FOGS AND NIGHTFALL.

I was very early the subject of "religious impressions;"—early imbued with the desire to "flee the wrath to come" I remember when but a child, being present at a revival meeting: Several were shouting glory! and telling what the "Lord had done for them."

The ministers and others were passing among the people, enquiring about their "feelings." A feeling (then unaccountable, but, which I have since discovered, is produced by magnetic sympathy) seized me, to be like them. I wept profusely; but had I been asked why, I could only have replied, I cant help it.

My reading then consisted principally of "Memoirs" and "Happy deaths of children," obtained from the Sunday school library. The desire for this kind of reading became a passion; I looked at nothing, cared for nothing else: would get alone and weep over them, despise and loathe myself, feeling I could never be so good or so happy as they. I conceived that I grieved God in my play by forgetting him; in vain I resolved to be serious, or pious; the ever gushing joyousness of my nature would flow out in spite of all attempts to repress it.

When about 13 years of age, we moved from our native place to Shildon, a small town in a colliery district. Father opened a grocery store, and did a good credit business among the "Godly"—that is to say, among divers sub-divisions of the Methodist sects, such as Primitive Methodists, Methodist Associationists, etc.

The colliers generally are a neglected, religious and ignorant class. Father had great faith in those who belonged to a church; would give them unlimited credit, and sadly they repaid his confidence. The Primitive Methodists, or Puritans, as they are generally called, were the happiest; none shouted so loud, or prayed so long as they did, and none were so deeply in debt. Curiosity often led me to their meetings, especially love-feasts and prayer meetings. Oh! what bawling and shouting! One might really think that their God was deaf, or on a journey. This reminds me of a remark, made by a friend of mine, who, passing a meeting house, where the people were praying and shouting, said to a religious friend, at his side, "What building is that?" "Oh!" said he, "that is God's house!" "Why," he answered, "I should think he must be from home, or his children would not make such a noise as that."

Their love-feasts were all confusion; three or four were sometimes moved to speak at once; each so absorbed in his own story, that he knew nothing of what the others were saying. Most of them were rough-spoken people, using dialects almost unintelligible.—One man at the top of his voice would say: "Bliss the Lerd; while ah've been sittin' here the devil has been sayin' 'don't speak; ye're a miserable sinner; ah'll have ye at last, and ye'll be ashamed to speak before so many;' but, bliss the Lerd, here ah is, and ah'll speak a good word for the Lerd." Then would follow a long account of temptations, shortcomings, etc., all of which were laid on the poor devil's back. The following is another gem of eloquence which fell from the lips of another of these love-feast orators: People say, "Don't nah when their sins is forgiven, but ah nahed; wadn't they nah if twenty steeyan (stone, 14 lbs.) o' fleur fell off their backs!" This man and scores of others that I have listened to, all happy

all enjoying God's smile—were deeply in debt, wouldn't pay or try to pay; were extravagant, outrageously so, and would feast and gormandize, no matter how or where the materials were obtained. I often used to tell father, that at the day of judgment, there would be quite a host who could testify he had fed the hungry and clothed the naked; besides, if there ever should be war again in heaven, he might raise quite a strong party, among those whom he had benefitted. "No fear," I used to say, "but you will get to heaven." My love of fun in these cases, as in other instances, for the time being, coined all before it, religious impressions not excepted; these latter, however, on regaining the ascendancy, would produce bitter sorrow and repentance. I had not yet learned the sentiment of the poet, that

"Religion never was designed
To make one's pleasures less."

Hence, that every so-called religion which tends to cast a shadow over the bright things of earth, and restricts the exercise of mirthfulness, is nothing but a sham.

These Primitive Methodists believe in "falling power;"—believed that if people were really sanctified, they would fall down into an unconscious state for a time. Several professed to have experienced this;—said, that just before falling, they saw bright lights;—others, that they saw a something which they compared to bars of brass. Nanny Pepper, a poor ignorant girl, who hoed potatoes, gathered turnips and cut wheat in the harvest fields, for a living, often enjoyed this "falling power." Almost every Sunday night, Nanny might have been heard praying mightily, for an hour or two; then would come the crisis; four or five men would try in vain to hold her, while she screamed like a mad creature and threw herself in a thousand grotesque attitudes. By and by, she would become exhausted and fall down, like one dead.

Being attracted to the meeting house, one Sunday afternoon, by an unusual uproar, I found two happy souls—Nanny Pepper and Peter Lacky—in an unconscious state. After the congregation was dismissed, we asked some friends near them to sprinkle water on their faces, but the females around interposed with a positive "No! for they were happy." By and by, they awoke, shorn of their strength and robbed of their healthy color. Peter, in a feeble voice, remarked; "Ah thout ah was e' hiven." Nanny Pepper went through this performance on Sunday, and on the Monday she was cursing and swearing in the potatoe field, or wherever she happened to be working. Mystery it was to those poor, ignorant people. Falling power, they were confident, was from the Lord—a super-excellent blessing conferred on his children. How Nanny could sin all the week, and get this blessing on the Sunday, was a problem they could not solve. James Ellet—a good old man, belonging to the Primitives—often visited at our house. Mother and he discussed this subject. Mother took a natural view of it; said it was excitement and mesmeric influence or sympathy. Poor James could not and would not believe this; he had experienced the blessing; besides, scripture was on his side. He brought forth Ezekiel and the brass which he saw in his visions; argued that Ezekiel felt the falling power too.

James was fastidiously conscientious; would never tell what another had said, unless he could give it in the same words. "I think," commenced or ended—sometimes both—every sentence. "I am afraid I should grieve the spirit and miss my way to heaven, by telling an untruth," he would say. Yet with all his conscientiousness, he used tobacco, though he thought it wrong—a waste of money and injurious to health. After repeated trials to conquer his taste for the weed, he gave up the attempt; he could not remove this "thorn in the flesh."

He used to say to mother: "Oh, Mrs. Denton, if you only experienced this falling power, you would be so happy; the world would lose all its charms; you would be so absorbed in love, you could not attend to your family or business; you could do nothing but pray

and praise." Mother would say: "Well, James, I don't want to feel it then; I believe in being "diligent in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord," just as the Bible says.

Our prayer meetings were not so noisy; our God we supposed was a little nearer to us; yet they were far, very far from being still. When Mr. Woolstonholme or Mr. Pierson, (two great vocalists) visited us, there was a "glorious outpouring of the spirit," and the people opened their mouths in loud rejoicings. These men had "great power with the Lord," (great power with the people.) There was an adding to the church, whenever they came amongst us.

I often determined to "give my heart to God," and often resolved to go to the penitent bench, but could not overcome my dislike to the operation, and thought when I should be converted, would prefer it to be in secret; did not like the idea of shouting "glory, hallelujah!" before a congregation. The shouting I imagined to be an essential part of the work, (performance, I ought to say.) To me there was something ridiculous about it; at any rate, it supplied food for my mirthfulness, in spite of my serious impressions.

The preachers expatiated considerably on this feeling; said that those who were ashamed of going to the penitent bench, showed that they were ashamed of God, and could never be converted, until they were willing to do anything, or be anything for God. Thus they argued, but it was long before my "stubborn heart would yield."

I made known my desire for salvation to some of the members. We always had prayer meetings Sunday evenings; at one of these meetings, they prayed and wrestled with God, for my conversion. I was urged to "throw myself upon the Saviour;" to cry out, "Oh, save me or I die;" not to think of waiting until I was better, but to come, all sinful and degraded; "Jesus is ready;" "God stands ready to receive;" "Save, Jesus, or I sink; I yield; O save me or I die!" These and a hundred more cant phrases, falsely called religious expressions, they kept repeating, in an exciting tone. I wept profusely, and at last thought I felt the something, but could not feel sure; there was a doubt about it. They asked me how I felt;—told them a feeling came over me very different from any I felt before; that it was a happy feeling. This, they assured me, was the blessing; I need not doubt; so I tried to persuade myself that I was admitted into God's favor.

"Now I am converted," I said to myself; "I must love and respect my father; 'children, obey your parents;' I must obey him, no matter if his request was unreasonable."—Went on pretty well for some days, though I had to rush to my room often, very often, to crush my insulted, indignant spirit down; prayed several times a day: "O Lord, make me love my father; destroy this feeling of repugnance," etc. etc., was the burthen of my prayer; but somehow or other, my prayers were not answered; I felt the same desire to answer, oppose and object that I had ever done; managed to keep pretty quiet for about three days, when the spirit breathed unto me of old, broke forth in a mighty torrent.—Chained I could not be; could not be a servile slave. Away went "mysterious feelings;" I was a backslider; I played with my companions as gaily as before; opposed every approach, or semblance of approach, or interference with my rights, as an individual, most daringly; thought my conversion only fancy; would give my heart to God sometime, but was sure I could not be a Christian, while with father, for in spite of everything, I could not love and respect him; so it was no use for me to try to be a Christian. Passed about a year in this deplorable condition, but a more deplorable season followed, though that was bad enough. Every Sunday I felt I "was on the brink of hell," and was constantly urged to join the church.

Mr. Pierson came; protracted meetings were got up; scores were converted. "The windows of heaven were opened," and pardons showered down copiously on "poor miserable sinners." My brother was a member of the church; had experienced the mysterious blessing; was very active in the meeting, urging the mourners to believe. "Only be-

lieve, only believe," I have often heard him say, "and the blessing is yours." What was it they were urged to believe? That they had the blessing, and then they would have it. Scores, yes, hundreds of times I have heard them say to "seekers:" "Believe that ye have it, and ye have it." For me this seemed an impossibility; I told them so. They referred me to the New Testament. I could then only say with the poet:—

"Stretch my faith's capacity wider and yet wider still,
And then with all that is in thee my soul for ever fill."

or:—

"Oh! to laugh at impossibilities,
And cry it should be done!"

How my girlish days were darkened by these heathenish ideas! How they poisoned the sweets of play; for I fancied it wrong to laugh and be merry. "How can you laugh when sinners are dropping into hell?" we were asked by our preachers. How I deplored my condition every night, believing that if I died before morning, I should awake in hell.—My reason, yes, "blind reason" would interpose; a discussion often followed between it and doctrines poured into me. "God is love;" why urge and beseech him? "Ask and ye shall receive;" but God knows what we need, why ask him then? Why so necessary to believe? I'm saved if I do right; surely, God can't send me to hell. But God requires it; 'tis God's appointed way. Weak mortals must not reason with God!

Again I was prayed with and for by the good people of our church. Again I received the blessing, attended, as before, by doubts and fears. Wm. W., one of the class-leaders, asked me if I would not like to "meet in class."

Class meetings I feared, because the members were expected to speak every week; but thinking they would help me on in the right path, I agreed to attend, if mother gave her consent. He called on mother; told her my wish. "Well," she said, "I would be very glad if Anne was converted; she needs it, but I can't give my consent for her to meet in class. She is too young to decide what religion is true. I prefer that her judgment be matured first; she will then be better able to come at correct conclusions, one of which will be, I think, that her present conversion is only the effect of excitement." He looked at her with astonishment, talked with her awhile and left, doubtless thinking she was very far from grace. To me there appeared something reasonable in what mother said; yet I thought she was not doing exactly right. Again I backslid; and as every slide is considered to take you farther backward and downward, I suppose I got a long distance, this time; became more and more natural, and hence less religious. Don't remember that I did any more wrong, or felt any greater inclination to wrong-doing; my natural tendencies were to the good, the true and perfect.

In a short time, Mr. Woolstonholme was sent for. He came. His power, as a vocalist, was extraordinary. He did indeed "pray without ceasing." His upturned eyes were constantly overflowing with tears. The night of my conversion came. Woolstonholme entered the pulpit; gave out the hymn in a low, melting tone:—

"Jesus the name high over all,
In hell, or earth, or sky:
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly."

His prayer was powerful, full of faith and praise; subject of discourse, the Crucifixion.—How the tears rolled down his face, as he pathetically depicted "Jesus, our God," bearing his cross, praying for the thieves, in his dying moments. The whole congregation joined with him in weeping. Low, stifled moans came from each and all.

Without dismissing the congregation, he slipped from the pulpit into the body of the church, and commenced the prayer meeting. His voice was as before, low (as we used to

say, so like the voice of heaven,) gradually rose as his faith rose; souls would be converted; he would have "seals for his ministry and souls for his hire." Others were called upon to pray, while he went among the people, to gather together the "penitents." I was found and led to the penitent bench, as a lamb to the slaughter. After weeping, praying and wrestling for about three hours, I obtained the prize—was converted, indeed!

INQUIRIES ANSWERED.

The following is an answer to "Inquiries Made," in the first number of the S. R.:

I am no preacher, nor am I any man's follower; but I hope a few words from me, may not be deemed out of place. I don't think the text quoted "is generally overlooked."—You say it is not preached upon. I answer, the PRAYING part is generally practiced upon; but the consequences which were then said to have followed prayer, do not follow. The filling with the Holy Ghost don't come, for that enabled the recipients to speak the truth, or was to, when it came. The shaking don't come, except sometimes by the stamping and other physical demonstrations of the congregation; and the being of one heart and one soul, don't come; and the great gifts (graces) don't come, such as speaking with tongues, [different languages,] and the cloven tongues, as of fire, none of these come. And now why, in the name of common sense, do you think the selling of lands and houses, and laying the prices of the things sold at the Apostles' feet, should come? When any of you Reformers shall make such demonstrations as followed the praying, on the day of Pentecost, you may expect the price of my houses and lands at your feet; but until you can make such demonstrations, it is rather extravagant, if not presumptuous and impudent, to ask. I suppose the reason why our modern preachers don't insist upon their followers selling their houses, lands, etc., and laying the prices at their feet, is, because they have a little more modesty than our self-styled Reformers; they only beg for a little; our Reformers want all. I am a believer in Individual Sovereignty; that is, do what I have a mind to; say what I have a mind to; come when I please; go when I please; and suffer all the consequences of my sayings, goings and doing, whether I please or not. This is the sum and substance of individual and collective rights. I will judge of my own rights; my neighbor will, as he has a right to do the same; and when my neighbor judges he has a right to what I think I have a right to, we will compromise; refer it to a third person, or fight it out, as the case may be. This is the way the world has been going along for the last hundred thousand years, and will forever hereafter, all you Reformers to the contrary notwithstanding. Human judgment always has and always will, in some shape or other, rule the world. Few men learn in any school but the one experience teaches, and the reason is, they can't learn in any other; and what is the use of blaming those who CAN, for teaching school in such a way and manner, as is best calculated to advance their pupils.—You, Reformers, are trying it after your own ideas of right, and you make but little progress. Those educated in your schools will make nothing but "FAT BITES" for the sharks of the world's school, unless protected by the sharks of association, that they may be food for them. The decree has gone forth, whosoever learns, must pay the tuition fee.—Governments always filch all they can from the people; that is, get all they can for the government they give the people, and associationists will do the same, and do it too in many ways the people don't think of; and I confess it is not a little provoking, to have a thing filched right before your eyes, by the rascality of law, and be forced to live in a community so blind they can't see it and won't help to reform it, but support the law, which plunders you and them. I have sometimes a mind to turn Reformer and boss a few, in order to get my money back: get houses and lands sold, and the price of the things sold, laid at my feet. But this, it seems, is not enough, for some Reformers; they would have female virtue theirs, or, at least, in some more convenient position than it is. E. L. CRANE.

REMARKS.—With the above, we received one dollar for the S. R., and request for RECEIPT. Isn't it odd that we association people didn't "shark" the Doctor of his dollar? But the Revolutionist will be carefully mailed to his address for a whole year, and we hope it will revolutionize some of his foggism.

His dollar was good, but his squib, better. By some means, we have all got "bumps of fun," big or little, and it is quite natural and right for us to gratify our sense of the ri-

diculous, upon fit occasions; and the Doctor's article is as good as a Comic Almanac or a glee song-book. But we don't mean to pay for his article, except in kind. We shall do him good in return.

His charge that "our Reformers want all," creates a slight suspicion that he has misread the passage. The record is, that distribution was made to every man as he had need, and that they (the people,) had all things common; it don't say that the APOSTLES HAD ALL!

Above, the Doctor is great on individual sovereignty! But a short time since, he wrote himself a firm believer in the doctrine, that man was "born to be head of woman." This fixes the fact that a man and woman are one, and that one, the man! He is the sovereign head. Upon similar principles, it is held that all men are created free and equal, but that negro men are born into slavery!

Certain Reformers insist upon the self-sovereignty of woman, that she may, at all times, be true to her instincts of purity and womanhood; but our gallant Doctor thinks there must be some bad motive in this, and there's not a libertine in Christendom who would not think so too. Meet companions they! To the pure, freedom is pure; but not so to the vulgar-minded. Out of the filthiness of their own imaginations do they judge others.

Woman is now inveigled. Social necessity often renders her easily caught, and then she has a "head." Not being a sovereign individual, she is at the mercy of another, and whether he love or hate, disease and unhappiness often follow as a consequence of their sins, dependent not upon her will, of course, but his. If woman were free and had the credit of a head of her own, a certain profession would have far less to do, and our considerate Doctor would not so readily "get his money back," as he says.

Next time he writes, the Doctor must be serious.

THE ANTI-PANTHEIST.—The first number has been received and read. It is a vain attempt to stay, with a feather, the rolling torrent of Reform, that is sweeping away the sand-based structures of the past—the accumulated rubbish of the dark ages. Ridiculous is the attempt, and we can only smile at the man who is solemnly engaged in making it.—The author would fain lead back the souls who are feeding fat in the pastures of God's heritage to the creed-fenced fields of a barren theology, where

Misery's flock on thistles feed,
And wolves are ever nigh.

Vain! vain! Some silly fugitive may return to bondage, his base soul remembering with regret the flesh pots of Egypt; but fruitless will be the attempt to induce an army of free-men to resume their cast-off chains, to bear him company.

The style of the work is excellent and its execution faultless; but it does seem a pity that so much pains should be taken to erect a sepulchre over a mass of dead ideas—dead beyond the power of resurrection. If those who are engaged in this work, would but make use of their time, talents and money, in teaching men the laws of God, as manifested in our own nature and his works around us, and leading them to obedience, they would then be living to some purpose, and their reward would be sure. But all attempts to resuscitate a dead theology must be as futile as it would be to try to revive the feudal system, and call back the ancient barons, to rule over their prostrate serfs.

W. D.

DIED.—MISS CATHARINE CONGDON, of Syracuse, N. Y., departed this life, Nov. 23, 1855. She was a member of the Progressive Union, intelligent, and a worthy example to all who knew her.

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